

TOWN OF ROCKLAND

Board of Selectmen

Town Hall
242 Union Street
Rockland, Massachusetts 02370

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S OPEN SESSION held on Monday, May 2, 2005 at 7:00 PM in the H. Bernard Monahan Memorial Room, Town Hall, 242 Union Street, Rockland, Massachusetts 02370.

ATTENDANCE: Louis U. Valanzola, Lawrence J. Chaffee, Mary A. Parsons, Keven D. Pratt and Kelli A. O'Brien-McKinnon

Chairman Lou Valanzola led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Rockland's Best Award was presented to Myles Angeley in appreciation of his 31 years of service to the Town of Rockland as a founder of the Rockland Athletic Club (a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting amateur baseball). The Rockland Athletic Club sponsored the American Legion Team from 1975-1979 and the Stan Musial Team from 1979 to the present. It is through your efforts and those of the many other sponsors and volunteers that many athletes in the Town of Rockland had the opportunity to play amateur baseball.

A. MINUTES –October 18, 2004 Open Session

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to approve Minutes of October 18, 2004 Open Session

Second: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 3-0-2 (Mrs. Parsons & Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon abstained)

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Allied Veteran's Council

Jeff Najarian spoke on behalf of the Allied Veteran's Council. Memorial Day is just around the corner (May 28th). We will meet in front of the VFW on May 28th and do the flagging of the graves. Anyone can help....the more people there the better. There will be a service on Sunday commemorating Memorial Day. The parade will be Monday, May 30th at 10:00 AM and will follow the typical route; first call is at 9:30AM. Any civic or veterans group is welcome to march.

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to approve

Second: Mrs. Parsons

Vote: 5-0

B. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Continued)

2. Town Administrator's Contract

Mr. Chaffee – Each of you (BOS) has a copy of the contract and I'll just go over the current changes. First is the date change (May 2, 2005); Article 2 – it is going to be for a one-year term; Article 4: Salary - \$84,000 (4.1 & 4.2 will be eliminated as it is a one-year contract; Article 5: Vacation Leave – 20 paid vacation days; last page – date changed to May 2, 2005.

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to approve changes in Town Administrator's Contract

Second: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 5-0

3. Continue Budget Discussion

Mr. Valanzola - I want to apologize to the residents of Rockland for the display here last Wednesday night. It was an embarrassment to all of us. I honestly didn't believe it would come to this, otherwise we would have never had the meeting. With that being said, I will not tolerate any disrespect exhibited at this meeting. Anyone wishing to speak has to be recognized by the Chair. They will not only show respect to the Chair but all the members of the board. In turn, the members of the BOS will be respectful to those speaking and other BOS members. I will not tolerate Department Heads, Town Employees, anyone being disrespectful of any of us. I hope other board members will support this and take any disciplinary action necessary if need be. We are going to be voting on a deficit budget. We need to get past this and work together as a team. I would like to thank our Town Accountant for being proactive and Mr. Kerrigan for being so patient standing up here for about an hour while he stated his position in a professional manner. I feel that nothing got accomplished last week and it was really tough watching that meeting.

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. Approve Permit for Poppy Sale – VFW Auxiliary 1788

The VFW Auxiliary would like permission to conduct their Buddy Poppy Campaign on May 19-21, 2005 at the Rockland Federal Credit Union and Lukes Liquors.

Motion: Mr. Pratt motion to approve Buddy Poppy Campaign

Second: Mrs. Parsons

Vote: 5-0

C. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

2. Accept Funds from A.W. Perry

Letter was read from John Spurr to Karen Sepeck: In connection with their agreement to fund certain public needs in regard to the development of 25 Technology Place a check was enclosed in the amount of \$455,000 for the purposed designated below:

\$200,000.00 for road improvements, with priority usage to fund any shortfall in the 2000 State Public Works Economic Development (PWED) grant to improve Hingham Street and Reservoir Park Drive;

\$60,000.00 toward the purchase of cruisers for the Rockland Police Dept.;

\$175,000.00 toward the purchase of a new ambulance for the Rockland Fire Department; and

\$20,000.00 for the Rockland School Department to enhance the school security system.

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to accept \$455,000.00 in accordance with Chapter 44: Section 53A from A.W. Perry

Section: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 5-0

Question was asked about the amount promised the Park Department. Mr. Plante- That is going to work a little different as it is a reoccurring item of a ten year period - it will come separately. Mr. Chaffee – We will actually be receiving four checks; the one we just received, the Park Department, the Water Department and the Sewer Department.

3. Federal FEMA Grant Fire Department

Chief Sammon is requesting \$15,428.00 to secure the FEMA grant. They have to be notified by May 30th if our funds are available. Questions were asked by the BOS.

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to approve \$15,428.00 from the H.U.D. CD Account

Second: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 5-0

4. Town Meeting Articles – Referred by Finance Committee

Mr. Plante explained Articles #23, #24, #27 and #34. BOS discussed the four different articles. Mr. Corvi spoke on #34. Articles were read.

C. NEW BUSINESS (Continued)

4. Town Meeting Articles – Referred by Finance Committee (Continued)

Motion: Mr. Pratt to approve Article #23 as read

Second: Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon

Vote: 5-0

Motion: Mrs. Parsons to approve Article #24 as read

Second: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 5-0

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to approve Article #27 as read

Second: Mrs. Parsons

Vote: 5-0

Motion: Mr. Pratt to approve Article #34 as read

Second: Mr. Parsons

Vote: 5-0

D. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Plante – Spoke on the concept of Selectmen's Liaison Assignments. The list that I gave you is merely a suggestion. You may want to make some changes. Basically the way it works is that we would notify the various boards and committees that they have a Selectmen Liaison. If they have any need they would contact that liaison. It takes the burden off the Chairman and spreads out the wealth. The other effect that it has is that the Selectmen could become more knowledgeable (has more expertise) with those boards and committees. They actually learn more of what is going on or if they attend a meeting they may want to report their findings to the rest of the board.

Motion: Mr. Pratt to table

Second: Mr. Chaffee

Vote: 5-0

Mr. Plante will put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

E. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Valanzola read letter from Mr. Plante inviting Water Department to this meeting. Water Department replied saying that the Water Commissioners are not scheduled to meet again until May 16th at which time they will discuss this request. In return they are extending an invitation to the BOS to attend their meeting on May 16th at the Abington Town Hall at 6:00PM if they wish to participate in the discussion. Mr. Valanzola suggested they put the Water Commission on the agenda for June 6th as we have a meeting that will conflict with May 16th. He will talk with Mr. Callahan.

E. CORRESPONDENCE (Continued)

A thank you letter from Althea Cobbett to the Fire Department was read. She particularly thanked Scott Margolis, Scott Duffy and Lt. Erickson. In September she will be having her Seventh Annual Pancake & Sausage Breakfast in memory of her father and husband. To show her appreciation, I would like to donate the proceeds of this years' breakfast to the EMT's to be used for any kind of equipment they need. As soon as I get the date, I will inform you of the details.

F. OPEN FORUM

Mr. Chaffee – Reminds everyone that we are going to be starting our annual appointments (applications need to be in by May 11th). If your term is due to expire, you will need to fill out a new application. It is not automatic. Adelphia cable has been sold to Comcast/Time Warner. There is a very difficult agreement being worked out between the companies. Rockland will become Comcast.

Mrs. Parsons – I attended the Board of Director's Meeting at the South Weymouth Naval Station to discuss ongoing issues of the Re-Use Plan. They are expecting to vote this Thursday. Weymouth wants all 40R monies to be distributed to Weymouth. The discussion went on to reducing 2400 housing units this will not generate but lose revenue. That was Bob Lunquist's opinion. John D: to find out what concerns on traffic from Abington and Rockland before Town Meeting votes. Rockland Open Space Committee never received answers to their questions. They need to resolve Union Street issues ... Abington is pushing that issue, they want the Rockland side of Union Street opened up. Abington claims to be the closest with Fire Station. I'm not sure what that is about the two Chiefs might want to address that. They want some kind of municipal agreement. Abington wants agreements concerning construction vehicles being routed out onto Weymouth Street in Rockland. Does not want construction vehicles on Route 18. They want the East/West connector under construction in Phase I. The SSTDC Board of Directors will put out a request for proposals for Fire and Police. (I thought it would be best if each Town were able to Police & Fire their own section.) The SSTDC is to pay for this service...it is not to be paid for by the Towns. I don't understand why they want to put out a request for proposal when this whole project is to benefit the three towns. I also requested a regional traffic study be done before we vote at Town Meeting. They made a \$2,500 payment to Abington for a traffic study. There is a big issue with bedroom counts in Abington (7,200 and the housing is 2,855).

Mr. Valanzola – All I have is a reminder that Town Meeting is Monday, May 9th at 7:00 PM. We still have a quorum of 300 so please get there on time.

Mr. Plante – Per the request of the Finance Committee we do not send the warrant out to every house. It became too expensive, however, we send out a mailer...it

F. OPEN FORUM (Continued)

was one page with the date, time and list of articles. We probably received 50 calls today asking about each article. We are telling folks that we sent these as an F.Y.I. We have warrants available at the Town Hall, Library and at the Senior Center. You can pick the warrants up and read up on the articles. Mr. Valanzola asked if it could be on the website. Mr. Plante – We'll see if we can do this. Mr. Valanzola suggested that if people do not have computers they could maybe request we mail them copies. Mr. Plante – I wouldn't mention mailing it, the Finance Committee in their infinite wisdom reduced our budget for Warrants and Town Meeting Reports again this year so it's going to be very tight. We are going to be right to the bone. Mr. Valanzola – What happens when we have a Special? Mr. Plante – That's a good question. Our flexibility isn't there...I'll see if I can get a hold of the Internet Committee tomorrow and see if maybe we can get it on the website somehow. I know that Mary has this all on disks.

Mr. Valanzola – I have a memo from Paul Cusick to Department Heads, Boards & Committees....Please be advised that a meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 4th at 6:30PM in the Selectmen's hearing room on Fiscal Policy. Mr. Plante – I usually go with the Chairman & Vice Chairman but if more of you want to go let me know as I will have to post it.

Mr. Pratt – May 9th Town Meeting...get out vote early...vote often.

Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon – This Saturday kicks off the 100th year Anniversary of Rockland Memorial Library. At 2:00 PM they start their celebration with an actor who portrays Andrew Carnegie and throughout the year we will be doing a bunch of things. (*Rumor has it that there will be refreshments!*)

Ms. Debbie O'Brien – The Re-Use Committee on the base had asked two members of the Planning Board to attend their meetings. They invited us to one, we gave them our email addresses and phone numbers but we haven't heard from them again. So we have not gone to any of these meetings except the very first one. Every other town is going and has been invited. Can the BOS do anything? Mr. Plante – I will call and see what is going on.

Chief Donovan – On a positive note (talking about grants). About two weeks ago we applied for a Homeland Security grant (the dept. and three other communities). We just got word this morning that we'll receive \$60,000 (no matching funds) to replace all our laptops and computers in the cruisers and to update our software and hardware. We also received word from the DA's office that we will receive a \$16,000 Justice Assistance Grant (no matching funds). So there is some positive feedback coming in.

Mr. Walter Schwalm (WCS Automotive) – I've been watching about all the financial difficulties the Town has been having. I'm here to tell everyone to get to the Town Meeting to help us with that but also here to ask you as Selectmen to see if there is a way to get the money to keep the services going. Do we need to bring the next

F. OPEN FORUM (Continued)

legislation down here to start answering questions as to why they can't give us the support that we need. Is there anyway that we can get together and get them down here so they can see that we need more of our money back. Whether they are spending our money to find out why the President had inappropriate sex....that \$40 million dollars could have been spent to fix our roads. Those are the type of things as a normal person I don't understand. We need a way of getting our money back from the government. I'd hate to leave Rockland just because we don't have money to fix the roads. Any business that comes into this Town they are going to have to worry about their people falling into pot holes the size of craters. They are never going to find there customers because they are going to be in a pot hole somewhere. Thank God for the Fire Department...I had eight more months with my Dad because they were able respond many times to help. If they don't have enough people on staff, I would have never had that. The Police Department protects my business and my home. Without them we are all in trouble. Is there any way we can all work together to come up with a solution to try to solve some of these problems?

Mr. Valanzola – As you may or may not be aware, last year we took a couple of deep cuts in local aide which amounted to \$1,522,000 and we haven't seen that back yet. That is what is really hurting us right now. We did invite Senator Morrissey and Representative Nyman to come down to give them the situation we are in now. They would always come down before and say, "where are we going to get the money from". We can tell them now that they didn't roll back the 5.3% temporary income tax that was assessed years ago when it went up to 6.2% and that's saving them about \$250 million per year. They haven't chosen to give anything back to the communities. I can see if they just rolled it back and said we don't have the money right now we're just recovering ourselves, but they didn't roll it back ... they have the money. For Senator Morrissey not to be able to find any time in his day to make it to one of our meetings (especially with the situation we are in) I think is unacceptable and I agree with you that we have to find a way to put some pressure on them. The other part of that is that we have always been too dependent on State Aide. We always got 35% of our budget, over 50% of our school is funded so consequently if there is any issues with the State having financial issues and they cut 10% of \$13 million. That's a lot of money. We are still feeling the effects of the cuts last year. We met these cuts with stabilization money, some insurance money, we took that ill-fated retirement deferral ... we didn't close the gap by reducing the expenses. We have to figure out a way to get these things in sync right now. I always say if you want to understand about the Town's finances go to a Finance Committee Meeting. They meet on Wednesday nights at 7:30 PM in the Lower Conference Room at Town Hall...that's the nuts and bolts of it right there.

Mr. Ed Kimball – If the base doesn't pass do we have a financial liability to Tri-Town? BOS – No. Chief Donovan – If it doesn't pass what happens to the land afterwards? Mrs. Parsons – They said they would work with the SSTDC in terms of trying to find a way to redevelop the base. I've been working with the

F. OPEN FORUM (Continued)

Navy for nine years now...they say one thing ... it takes several years to get to that point and then they change their minds. As far as Mass Development, they were invited down here three years ago but SSTDC turned them down. They can't just come in and take the base. The former NASPC Planning Committee had help from Mass Development but they didn't want them to have any part of this base. It's not a State project.

Mr. Flaherty – How is mitigation going with SSTDC and are we making any progress? Have you got all the Departments involved giving their input to what they need. Mr. Chaffee – It's not going as well as I would like to see it go. I thought the number they offered us was insulting. Unless it improves a whole lot I will not stand in favor of the plan. If they want to be partners...come to the table and help the three Towns. One thing I will tell you that I'm trying to stay away from is....People.....Any type of mitigation that involves people because if that plan dies tomorrow and we have hired people because we received money from them ...now we have people that we cannot afford. Money payments toward roads, budget deficits, etc. those things are all fair table. Mr. Flaherty – What is the time table? Mr. Chaffee – We have to know before Town Meeting because I'm not getting up at Town Meeting as speak for or against the plan until I know what their plan is.

Tom Smith – Last year he attended ZBA meetings. He has issues with ZBA's decisions on variances. He wants to go back to the old variances and to make sure they are abided by the ones originally set. Mr. Plante – Suggested that perhaps when openings become available on the ZBA that Mr. Smith might apply. Mr. Smith – I'm not dissatisfied – I just want to go back to where we were. No variances if there is inadequate footage or inadequate square footage or frontage. I think the people on the ZBA are doing a good job; it's just this one issue. I have another problem with Rockland Auto....the mess is unbelievable. There are eleven dead vehicles lying out in the front. I doubt very much if the oil and gas have been drained from these vehicles. I don't know how a license for a commercial property can be given in a residential area. I question that as well. I question the mess; (it's an eyesore) a haven for skunks, raccoons and feral cats. That place needs to be cleaned up. I brought this up at the ZBA meeting and they said it was up to you. Mr. Valanzola – We will look into it. Mr. Plante – The building inspector will be back from vacation on Monday...we'll have him look into it. Mr. Chaffee- that was an issue when we renewed his license last year. Mr. Plante – He has a Class III (Junk License). He's been there long before the houses were in...he's "grandfathered" in. Mr. Pratt – You're correct, this needs to be addressed.

Chief Sammon – Reminder State law has open burning from January 15-May 1st. I just want everyone to know that there is no more open burning.

F. OPEN FORUM (Continued)

Carol Perilli – The Rockland Beautification Committee is holding a dance on May 21st at the Eagles Hall on Park Street from 7:00-11:00PM. There will be music for all generations and prizes for period costumes, free food and great people. We hope to see you there. For tickets you can call Ray Hebert at 781-878-2433.

Motion: Mr. Chaffee to adjourn at 8:32PM and enter Executive Session for purposes of potential litigation and not to reconvene.

Second: Mr. Pratt

Vote: 5-0 Mr. Chaffee-yes, Mrs. Parsons-yes, Mr. Pratt-yes, Mrs. O'Brien-McKinnon-yes and Mr. Valanzola-yes

LAWRENCE J. CHAFFEE
VICE-CHAIRMAN

BRADLEY A. PLANTE
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR